

AGENDA ITEM V A

PROPOSED LETTER OF INTENT

GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

M.S. in Nursing – Nurse Educator Option

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Board approved the M.S. program in Nursing at Grambling State in June, 1999. At that time, only the Family Nurse Practitioner option was made available. Grambling is now proposing to add the Nurse Educator option with the choice of Adult/Geriatric or Maternal Child as clinical focus areas. Graduates of this program will be prepared to teach in university schools of nursing and to work at acute- and/or long-term care facilities.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Appropriateness with Institutional Role, Scope, and Mission

The proposal is appropriate to Grambling's role, scope and mission.

Potential for Unnecessary Program Duplication

Northwestern State University, sixty-five miles away, offers an M.S. in Nursing with four options, including the one proposed here by Grambling. Because many of Grambling's potential nursing students find it prohibitively expensive or inconvenient to travel while working full-time (as is apparently typical), the proximity of Northwestern's program is weakened as a potential objection. Other programs in the MSN Consortium (McNeese, Southeastern, LSU, ULL, SUBR) that offer the Nurse Educator option are located 200 to 300 miles away. Therefore, the potential for *unnecessary* program duplication is weak.

Prospects for Funding

The University estimates that the new program will cost \$195,000 in its first year, with costs averaging around \$180,000 per year for the following four years. The University notes that financial resources have already been appropriated through the Desegregation Agreement for the M.S. in Nursing, and that five years of such funding remain. Monies spent in previous years (for the Family Nurse Practitioner option) have procured resources useful to the Nurse Educator option proposed here. The current proposal does not specify the exact amounts of available resources, however, so it is difficult to determine the extent to which prospects for funding are sound.

Consistency with Desegregation Settlement Agreement

The Desegregation Settlement Agreement provides for the establishment of an M.S. in Nursing at Grambling State University. That agreement does not, however, address the range of options that may be offered.

STAFF SUMMARY

The staff concludes that the Letter of Intent for the Nurse Educator option of the M.S. in Nursing meets most of the requirements of the **Academic Affairs Policy 2.4 - Letters of Intent for Projected New Academic Programs**. Concerns about funding remain; a complete budget was not provided and the availability of University funds (State and/or Desegregation) and anticipated revenues to support program costs is not known. The staff notes that if this Letter of Intent is approved, it may be developed into a full proposal which will be further reviewed by the staff and/or external consultants. Once this review process is completed, the staff will summarize its findings and make recommendations to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and to the Board of Regents for final action on program implementation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the Letter of Intent from Grambling State University for a projected Nurse Educator option in the Master of Science in Nursing program, with the stipulation that the full program proposal shall provide a complete five-year budget, including all costs and sources of anticipated revenues needed to support these costs.